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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2009

In Today's Papers

Davutoglu in Kabul

Weekend papers report that at a joint press conference with his Afghan counterpart Dadfar Spanta, Turkish FM Ahmet Davutoglu said the two sides agreed to establish a strategic dialogue and cooperation mechanism. Responding to a question on the Afghan elections, Davutoglu said: "no matter who, from which political party or ethnic group wins the elections, all are our friends and will be treated equally by Turkey." For his part, Spanta said Turkey had a big role to play in Afghanistan and would undoubtedly do its best to support a secure election in Afghanistan.

PM Erdogan: "We are Investigating the TGS Document; If Necessary We Will File A Lawsuit"

All papers report on a story that broke in leftist daily Taraf over the weekend. The paper printed a document and claimed it was authored by the Turkish General Staff (TGS). Titled "Action Plan for Combating Religious Fundamentalism," stamped "secret" and signed by Naval Staff Colonel Cicek, it targets the government and all the members of the Fethullah Gulen community, particularly those within the military. The plan's "Implementation" section states the following: "An effort will be made to put an end to the activities of religious groups, and particularly the AKP government and the Gulen group, which dream of overturning the secular system and establishing an Islamic state."

Today's papers give extensive front-page coverage to PM Erdogan's comments regarding the document on Fethullah Gulen Community and the ruling AKP. Liberal-intellectual Radikal reports that during his party's meeting in Sanliurfa, Erdogan commented on a document claimed to be prepared by the General Staff to end the AK party and Fethullah Gulen activities in Turkey, and said "we are investigating the issue, if necessary, we will file a lawsuit against those who may have made such a plan."

Meanwhile, at this time, all TV channels are reporting that the Turkish General Staff (TGS) Prosecutor's Office just announced that such plans and documents do not belong to the TGS.

Tehran Erupts Following Iranian Election. The protests and violence after the presidential election in Iran remains the focus of major media reports. Mainstream Haberturk reports "Chaos in Iran, Reformists Into Custody," and notes, "while the protests of the defeated Mousavi's supporters continue, 170 reformists are taken into custody." Liberal Radikal writes, "Iran's Reformist Leaders Rounded Up." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines, "Iran Boils," and reports "President Ahmadinejad is dismissing claims of election irregularities, while his main opposition, Mousavi, calls on supporters to continue the protest peacefully." Papers report world governments have so far reacted cautiously, while voicing concern about the allegations and the election violence. Mainstream Hurriyet reports "the European Union has expressed concern over how Iran's presidential elections have been conducted, and France's foreign minister Kouchner yesterday condemned the police response to street protests in Tehran." Mainstream Milliyet reports the US Vice President Biden telling NBC TV that "he has real doubts on the election results and the US is monitoring the situation." The paper also says, "President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan have sent messages to Iranian President Ahmadinejad to congratulate him for his election victory."

Editorial Commentary on Iran Elections

Ferai Tunc wrote in mainstream Hurriyet (6/14): "Even though Musavi is not a leader against the system, he is for reconciliation and more dialog with the west. The current campaign by Musavi and his supporters against the election results indicates that Iran is moving toward a tension-filled atmosphere in domestic politics. The more this atmosphere deepens, the more difficult for the Ahmedinejad

ANKARA 00000826 002 OF 003

administration to engage in a dialogue with the U.S."

Omer Taspinar wrote in mainstream Sabah: "Iranian elections are no longer legitimate. There were strong indications this weekend about systematic corruption in the process and the elections seem to have been far from fair, open and democratic. The Iranian Islamic regime is afraid of Obama's message for change and dialogue. In the end, it is a big disappointment for Iranian people as a serious chance for peace and justice is slipping away due to these illegitimate elections."

Kursat Bumin wrote in Islamist oriented Yeni Safak: "Iran presents a complex picture and deserves a careful analysis of its system. The nature of the Iranian system comes with extraordinary authority given to the Mollas, which makes the country's president less powerful. Thus the entire election process is more of a selection by the religious rulers than normal elections. That said, the Iranian system is still more democratic compared to Saudi Arabia and Syria."

Semih Idiz wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "There will be certain circles to be happy about the election of Ahmedinejad and Israeli conservatives are one of them. They were unhappy about President Obama's effort for friendship with Iran, and with the Ahmedinejad's victory they should be happy. There is a correlation between Iranian extremists and Israeli extreme conservatives as more Iran gets harsh, more fascistic the Israeli conservatives are getting. If new terrorist attacks by Hizbullah and Hamas occur against Israel then things will exactly be politically exploitable for Netanyahu."

Netanyahu Endorses Demilitarized Palestinian State. (Radikal) Coverage is mostly straightforward on the speech of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on Sunday endorsing for the first time the creation of a Palestinian state, provided it was demilitarized. Mainstream Milliyet, liberal Radikal and leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet all carry the same headline, "Netanyahu Endorses Demilitarized Palestinian State" and report Israeli Prime Minister as saying "if the Palestinians recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people, then we arrive at a solution based on a demilitarized Palestinian state alongside Israel." Meanwhile, papers report "Palestinian leader Abbas spokesman said 'it sabotages all efforts to save the peace process.'"

Arms Giants Lobby for AGR.

Mainstream Hurriyet, Vatan and liberal Radikal cite AP as a source and report "Four US and one UK arms companies lobbied the US Congress to prevent the passage of the Armenian genocide resolution. Energy giant Chevron supported them too." Papers report these companies, BAE, Goodrich, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and United Technologies spent 14 million dollars in the first quarter of this year to lobby on several issues, including opposition to AGR."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- One soldier and one PKK terrorist were killed during the clashes in Hakkari's Yuksekova region
- 10,000 people marched with pro-Ocalan slogans in Diyarbakir following the two day convention of DTP. At the end of the congress DTP announced that a solution to Kurdish issue is not possible without Ocalan.
- TGS announced that there had been 2,960,848 anti-personnel land mines in TGS's inventory. TGS started destroying those mines in October 2008 and was planning to destroy them all until 2010. 1,635,520 mines were destroyed by June 2009

ANKARA 00000826 003 OF 003

- The Central Bank curbs maximum interest rates for credit cards
- The University Entrance Examination (OSS) took place across Turkey yesterday and around 1,350, 000 students sat for the exam
- Police teams on Sunday discovered more than 216 bullets made for G3 assault rifles near Istanbul's Yenikoy, after a swimmer reported having found a bullet in the sea.

World

- A forest fire rages uncontrolled in central Greece burning farmland, vineyards and threatening homes.

JEFFREY